

# **OPERATION: SAFE COMMUNITY**

A MEMPHIS FAST FORWARD INITIATIVE



**The 2017-2021 Plan**

**to Make the Memphis-Shelby County  
Community**

**One of the Safest its Size in the Nation.**



## The Memphis-Shelby County 2017-2021 Crime Plan

In 2006, Memphis Fast Forward undertook an ambitious plan to reduce both violent and property crime through its public safety arm, the Memphis Shelby Crime Commission. The first five-year Operation: Safe Community plan spanned 2007-2011 and used the date that Memphis Fast Forward was organized – 2006 – as the baseline for the monthly reporting of violent crime and property crime, a date that also coincided with a significant rise in violent crime. This first five-year plan, OSC-1, was comprised of 15 research-backed, data-driven strategies, and the result was a reduction in major violent crime of 22.8% and in major property crime of 25.5%.<sup>1</sup>

Operation: Safe Community adopted key operating principles for its work at the time:

- The crime prevention plan supports the countywide plan for economic prosperity.
- The plan builds on strong private and public partnerships.
- Multi-level governmental participation among city, county, state, and federal agencies is essential for success.
- The plan evolves with a willingness to change course in light of emerging trends.
- The plan is characterized by clearly defined metrics reported to the public.
- Partners' accountability is central to the plan.
- The plan's implementation is based on evidence-based or evidence-informed models when possible.

Upon the conclusion of the first-five year plan, Operation: Safe Community assessed its results, recognized that more work needed to be done, and developed a second five-year plan to build on the momentum already created. The second five-year plan began in 2012. A separate report sets forth the outcomes of OSC-2 in greater detail. However, overall, some erosion occurred in the major violent crime reduction successes of OSC-1. Still lower than the 2006 levels, reductions in major violent crime now stand at approximately 15% below 2006 levels for Memphis and approximately 18% below for all of Shelby County. Major property crime reflected more success, with continued reductions

<sup>1</sup> These were the statistics as they were reported at the end of the five year period. As crime data evolves over time, these percentages may not coincide exactly if the same data is reviewed from today's perspective, but they are not substantially different.



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from 2012 to the present. The current reduction in major property crime below 2006 levels is approximately 36% for Memphis and 39% for Shelby County.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, overall incidents of crime (includes 46 categories of offenses) decreased by 24.5% from 2006 to year end 2015.<sup>3</sup>

Memphis has been one of a number of U.S. cities that has recorded significant increases in the numbers of murders, a rise that national criminologists have been unable to explain since there is no clear commonality among cities such as Memphis, Jacksonville, Nashville, Louisville, Las Vegas, Chicago, and Los Angeles. In response to these trends, this third version of Operation: Safe Community narrows its focus and objectives in part to concentrate primarily on violent crime and efforts that can have the greatest impact.

To assist in this process, OSC-3 also fine-tuned its key operating principles for determining how best to have an impact:

- The Objective is requested and/or supported by the relevant “owner(s)” of the Objective.
- The Objective is evidence-based or evidence-informed.
- The Objective can have a near-term impact on the violent crime rate in particular (appreciably measurable during pendency of the plan).
- The Objective is criminal justice system involved.<sup>4</sup>
- The “owner(s)” of the Objective are agreeable to an independent evaluation of both their processes and outcomes.

The OSC-3 plan encompasses five specific goals and sixteen specific objectives. The plan was developed with input from approximately 500 citizens and approved by the board of directors of the Crime Commission, composed of fifty community leaders equally divided between the public and private sectors. It is a five-year plan designed to make the Memphis community one of the safest of its size in the nation.

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2 FBI crime data.

3 TBI crime data.

4 While critical to a holistic view of the causes of crime, poverty, and community well-being, many items in OSC-2 did not directly impact the criminal justice system. We recognize these efforts and welcome the work being done in other sectors of the community on them. The Crime Commission will continue to convene with the leaders in these areas to stay abreast of developments and look for opportunities to collaborate, but the OSC-3 plan will no longer actively monitor their implementation.



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To supercharge this next phase, OSC-3 is guided by a new joint venture between the Crime Commission and the University of Memphis, which has created the Public Safety Institute. The Institute is headed by Bill Gibbons, former Tennessee Commissioner of Safety and Homeland Security. He simultaneously serves as president of the Crime Commission.

The Institute is housed in the University's School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy and will draw on researchers from multiple disciplines and departments across the University, including the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice and the Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law. In addition, the Institute hopes to explore policies and strategies for improving public safety with national experts at other universities.

Some guiding principles impacting selection of goals and objectives for OSC-3 include the realization that high crime rates and perceptions of lack of safety cannot be resolved by law enforcement alone. As many in the law enforcement and justice communities have repeatedly acknowledged, we cannot "arrest our way out of this problem." However, accountability for criminal acts is a fundamental tenet of society. Many of the provisions in the Public Safety Act of 2016, enacted by the Tennessee General Assembly and effective January 1, 2017, reflect the need for more meaningful accountability with a focus on impacting the number of repeat offenders. The OSC-3 plan reflects, in large part, a recognition that all parties must be at the table for crime to decrease in meaningful measure. It reflects that accountability rests not just on those accused of crime, but on the entire system to help move people to a place of success following payment of a societal debt for crimes committed, recognizing there are no easy solutions to these issues. It recognizes that domestic violence continues to comprise a high proportion of overall violent crime. (Based on TBI data, domestic violence incidents account for roughly half of all reported incidents against persons.) It recognizes that too many citizens living in apartment complexes are at risk for both violent and property crime victimization. It recognizes that keeping youth out of the criminal justice system and addressing underlying issues has far more promise at reducing crime rates now and into the future.

OSC-3, in keeping true to its key guiding principles, will closely monitor fidelity to processes and measurement of outcomes. The plan is designed to be evolutionary; as ongoing evaluations occur, the plan can be amended when an evaluation warrants a change of course with regard to goals, objectives, or outcome measurements.



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### **Plan Outcomes by end of 2021 (2016 as baseline year):**

- 1. Reduce the major violent crime rate (defined by the FBI as murder, rape, aggravated assault and robbery) by at least 30%.**
- 2. Reduce the major property crime rate (defined by the FBI as burglary, auto theft and other felony theft) by at least 28%.**
- 3. Reduce the overall crime rate (defined by the TBI as 46 categories of crime including all major crime) by at least 25%.**

### **GOAL A. Strengthen community engagement in crime prevention efforts.**

Strengthening community involvement and improving community relations with law enforcement are of critical importance. While most people of good faith strive for these goals in their professional and everyday lives, setting specific actions to achieve these ends is important to bringing a deliberateness and commitment to the process. Community engagement permeates all measures set forth in this plan. The goal of strengthening community engagement in crime prevention is measured through an assessment of process outcomes, rather than crime reduction outcomes *per se*. Improvements in these processes will impact the ultimate outcome goal of reduced crime.

#### **Key Goal Outcomes:**

- 1. Community satisfaction with law enforcement will improve.**
- 2. Increase the number of citizens participating in community groups related to crime prevention by at least 100%.**

**(These Goal A outcomes contribute to the target of reducing overall crime by at least 25%.)**

**Objective A1: Establish and maintain a “Neighborhood Safety Initiative” (NSI) that builds on and strengthens partnerships among neighborhood groups, law enforcement, and other city/county government agencies. (Crime Commission, DA, MPD, Police Joint Agencies, neighborhood watch groups, Safeways, City of Memphis and Shelby**



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### **County Code Enforcement)**

#### **Why this objective?**

Citizens are key players in community safety, especially when they are organized into groups targeting unwanted activity in their neighborhoods.\_ Memphis and Shelby County are fortunate to have a deep vein of neighborhood organizations focused on improving their respective communities. There are numerous groups<sup>5</sup>, among them, neighborhood watch groups which are aligned with police precincts and enable citizens to report unusual or potentially criminal activity in their communities to the authorities. Law enforcement also educates members of neighborhood watch organizations on how to improve safety in their homes and communities. Additionally, across Shelby County, police joint agencies (PJAs) are partnership organizations between citizens and government and consist of representatives from various neighborhood groups, meeting monthly to address specific concerns relating to health code, housing code, and/or criminal activity concerns with both law enforcement and code officials.

Underlying the existence of these organizations is a recognition that citizens living within a community are best situated to observe problem properties and problem people and bring them to the attention of government. Addressing these concerns is a central tenet of local government and part of the taxpaying contract with citizens. Problem properties are those defined as those in violation of code requirements and/or properties that attract criminal activity. Problem people are those individuals who engage in habitual anti-social behaviors which may be criminal in nature. These individuals can wreak havoc on the greater peace of the community. Many of these problem people are well known to law enforcement through prior contact or other means, but citizen complaints form a powerful tool in helping to restore order to a community.

In a Memphis Police Department neighborhood survey conducted in 2014 in the areas of Frayser and South Memphis, the largest number of citizens surveyed said they would be interested in a neighborhood watch program in their area.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Memphis Police Department lists hundreds of neighborhood watch organizations throughout the community, many of them extremely active. Others might be more active with a helping hand.

<sup>6</sup> Compared to such things as job readiness programs, health fairs, or GED training. Youth programs came in a close second. Harris, Dr. Laura, "Evaluation and Community Outreach Policing (COP): Summary Report of Evaluation Capacity Building Activities (September 2014,



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This is great news because studies show that neighborhoods with organized watch or other community groups experience lower crime rates than those without such organizations. A 2008 meta-analysis of studies on the impact of neighborhood watch organizations found there was an overall reduction in crime in those areas.<sup>7</sup> Recognizing that neighborhoods are different, have different safety concerns and priorities, different geographic considerations, etc., these organizations must be tailored to and cognizant of these divergent needs. Of utmost importance is that these groups evolve organically and truly reflect the needs and desires of the citizens residing within their borders. The best path to that result is for these groups to be citizen-led, citizen-focused and provided with appropriate support and response by authorities, be it law or code enforcement, or the courts or prosecutors.

The DA, MPD, City of Memphis, Shelby County, and the Crime Commission will team up with these neighborhood groups to expand engagement in crime prevention and maximize government responsiveness and accountability for action. The initiative will incorporate elements of models including “police joint agencies” and “neighborhood watch,” among others. The NSI will be piloted first in two police precincts, then expanded to all nine police precincts upon a preliminary evaluation indicating its effectiveness.

### **Key Outcomes:**

- 1. Ensure that all neighborhoods in NSI geographic areas have effective neighborhood watch groups.**
- 2. Obtain a solve rate of at least 80% for citizen complaints within NSI areas.**
- 3. Reach an average turnaround time for resolving citizen complaints from NSI areas of no more than 30 days.**

### **Objective A2: Establish a community prosecution model in targeted communities.**

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p.17). This research was funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention.

<sup>7</sup> Holloway, Katy, Trevor Bennett, and David P. Farrington, Crime Prevention Research Review No. 3, “Does Neighborhood Watch Reduce Crime?” Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (2008). The authors cautioned, however, that there was a wide variety of results depending on methodology of analysis, and not all neighborhood watch organizations were effective. The plan for implementation in Shelby County will take the divergent needs of communities into account to avoid this pitfall.



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### Why this objective?

Another tool to bring better responsiveness to these citizen-led efforts is to engage with a community prosecution model. Community prosecution “seeks to involve neighborhood residents in identifying local public safety priorities and...developing and implementing strategies to address them.”<sup>8</sup> Based on the best practices exhibited in communities dating back to the 1990s and originating in Multnomah County, Oregon,<sup>9</sup> if implemented with fidelity, community prosecution has demonstrated a positive influence on reducing rates of violent and, to a smaller extent, property crime.<sup>10</sup> In fact, both the National District Attorneys Association and the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys are proponents of this model. NDAA has established the National Center for Community Prosecution. APA has partnered with the U.S. Department of Justice’s Bureau of Justice Assistance and the Center for Court Innovation to focus on providing technical assistance to help prosecutors develop “the requisite skills to strengthen links between the criminal justice system and the community while promoting partnership building and encouraging problem-solving strategies.”<sup>11</sup> Community prosecution enables representatives from the District Attorney’s office to fully enmesh themselves within specific areas of the city, taking responsibility for prosecution of all crime occurring in those geographic areas. Under one model for Shelby County, the prosecutor might hold office hours at the precinct, outside of 201 Poplar. This enables the community and the law enforcement officers to know the prosecutor and vice versa. In another model, the prosecutor might remain at the DA’s central office, but is still assigned criminal cases associated with the specific neighborhood. The National Center mentioned above recommends adherence to these four key principles in implementing community prosecution:

1. Recognizing the community’s role in public safety;
2. Engaging in problem solving;
3. Establishing and maintaining partnerships; and

<sup>8</sup> Miles, Thomas J., “Does the ‘Community Prosecution’ Strategy Reduce Crime? A Test of Chicago’s Experience,” American Law and Economics Review, (August 14, 2013, p.5).

<sup>9</sup> Other communities that are successfully engaging in this model include Philadelphia, San Diego, Phoenix, Knox County, TN, among many others. See, Bureau of Justice Assistance Bulletin (November 2002), retrieved from <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/bja/192826.pdf>.

<sup>10</sup> Miles, at pp.16-17.

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.apainc.org/community-prosecution/> (n.d.).



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4. Evaluating outcomes of activities.<sup>12</sup>

Community prosecution will be an adjunct to the Neighborhood Safety Initiative (NSI) outlined in Objective A1. Prosecutors will participate in NSI neighborhood meetings, further integrating their role in the community and providing needed support to help move problem properties and problem people through the system in an appropriate way.

### **Key Outcomes:**

1. Accelerate the disposition time for cases from the participating neighborhoods.
2. Increase the percentage of arrests that are accepted for prosecution.

### **Objective A3: Intensify problem-solving community policing through stronger police-citizen relations.**

#### **Why this objective?**

Mindful of the conversation taking place here and across the country, an increased effort to improve community-police relations is not a luxury, but a core necessity, of good police work. It contributes substantially to a sustained sense of community well-being. Community policing is one, but very important, part of those improved relations. Adopted as an integral practice by many police forces across the country, the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 endorsed community policing at the federal level, ultimately resulting in creation of the federal Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), which provided long-range funding in support of its use throughout the country. “Community policing is a law enforcement philosophy, a way of thinking about improving public safety. ... [C]ommunity policing efforts can generally be grouped into three broad categories: organizational transformation, community partnership, and problem solving. ... By definition, a comprehensive community policing model permeates almost every aspect of a police department ...”<sup>13</sup>

12 [http://www.ndaa.org/nccp\\_home.html](http://www.ndaa.org/nccp_home.html) (n.d.)

13 Lawrence, Sarah and McCarthy, Bobby, “What Works in Community Policing?” (November 2013), retrieved from [https://www.law.berkeley.edu/files/What\\_Works\\_in\\_Community\\_Policing.pdf](https://www.law.berkeley.edu/files/What_Works_in_Community_Policing.pdf).



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MPD is engaged in a community policing effort, both through training of patrol officers as well as a dedicated Community Outreach Program (COP) unit, which could be more robust. The MPD COP unit has been effective. During the second Operation: Safe Community, as noted earlier, the Memphis Police Department Community Outreach Program (COP) officers conducted surveys relating to citizen complaints and satisfaction in two areas where the COP unit was active, South Memphis and Frayser. More than 74% of residents surveyed reported they were somewhat or very satisfied with their neighborhoods overall and more than 80% rated police services as good, very good, or excellent.<sup>14</sup> Both of these communities have higher violent crime rates than many other parts of the city, and the COP units are part of a long term strategy to help reduce crime in those neighborhoods. The current MPD COP unit became active in 2012. As executed by the MPD, community policing encompasses more than the police department sponsoring community events to build good will. It includes officers out of patrol cars and on the ground, establishing important relationships that help prevent and solve crime. MPD “officers address the problems in the target areas through a three prong (sic) approach: identification, enforcement and education.”<sup>15</sup> Although the survey conducted in 2014 is some evidence of good will built through community policing, there is much more that can be done to improve community relations with the police department, both within these neighborhoods and elsewhere, and, at the same time, view these efforts through the practical and empirical lens of actual crime reduction in these communities.<sup>16</sup> Citizens deserve safe communities, and both citizens and law enforcement deserve respect. Memphis has not been immune to controversial police action. However, through these ongoing community policing activities in certain portions of the city, Memphis has also laid some very important groundwork, and these efforts need to be both applauded and expanded.

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14 Harris, (September 2014, p.13).

15 Retrieved from <http://www.memphispolice.org/initiatives.asp>

16 Although some research has questioned a direct causal relationship between implementation of community policing and crime reduction (<http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs11292-014-9210-y>), it remains an important component of proven positive interventions such as “problem-oriented policing, hot spots policing, and focused deterrence approaches,” Obbie, Mark, “Tackling Violent Crime: What Works, What Doesn’t?” The Crime Report (August 11, 2016), retrieved from <http://thecrimereport.org/2016/08/11/gun-violence-what-works-what-doesnt/>, quoting Braga, Anthony, <https://www.hks.harvard.edu/programs/criminaljustice/research-publications/executive-sessions/executive-session-on-policing-and-public-safety-2008-2014/publications/crime-and-policing-revisited>. Furthermore, fidelity to community policing as a department-wide philosophy rather than to a more limited in scope execution, has demonstrated more of an impact with “measurable reductions in crime.” See, Lawrence and McCarthy (2013).



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### **Key Outcomes:**

- 1. Increase the number of productive tip line calls by xxx.**
- 2. Increase the number of citizen-initiated tips/complaints that result in charges being filed.**

### **Objective A4: Expand Safeways' intensive crime prevention program for Shelby County apartment communities.**

#### **Why this Objective?**

According to the US Census 2014 American Community Survey, apartment units comprise approximately 30% of the occupied housing units in Shelby County. Through August of 2016, apartments accounted for 19% of reported crime in Shelby County. Apartments accounted for 15% of non-DV violent crime, 12% of property crimes, and 25% of domestic violence offenses.<sup>17</sup> Reducing the number of crimes committed in apartment communities will not only improve the safety and quality of life for apartment residents, but will free up limited law enforcement resources to engage in proactive policing throughout the county.

Safeways is a Memphis-based nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that helps Shelby County apartment owners and managers of apartment communities reduce crime and improve quality of life for their residents. Working with owners, managers and residents, the Memphis Police Department, and other governmental, nonprofit, and community organizations, Safeways achieves its objectives through:

- Improving the amount and quality of information about crime and calls for police available to property management and security personnel;
- Increasing communication and engagement between residents, management, security, and law enforcement;
- Strict enforcement of the Shelby County District Attorney's Anti-Trespass Program on Safeways client sites;
- Educating property management and staff on place management best practices that reduce crime;
- Providing connectivity to social and other service providers (such as the Family Safety Center) for apartment residents in need; and

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17 Crime data from Memphis Police Department.



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- Remediating physical conditions on and around apartment communities which foster and facilitate criminal activity.

The primary tool utilized by Safeways to address risk conditions on a property is “Crime Prevention through Environmental Design” (CPTED). CPTED’s foundational principle is that the physical environment influences human behavior. Strategic changes to the physical environment to increase visibility, reduce isolation, control boundaries, and project “territoriality” help prevent or reduce crime by eliminating or limiting opportunities for criminal acts to be committed. CPTED has long been recognized as an effective problem-oriented policing strategy, and it remains a hot topic in the sustainable development and new urbanism movements.<sup>18</sup> Multiple studies have shown that CPTED strategies reduce burglaries, as well. A 2012 study also found that CPTED is one of the most effective mechanisms to reduce fear of crime among citizens.<sup>19</sup> Reduced fear of crime leads to enhanced quality of life.

Safeways clients may choose from a variety of available consulting and information services, such as one-time or short-term inspection, statistical reporting, or consultation. However, Safeways’ most popular service – proven to reduce crime – is the Safeways Certification Program. Certified properties and applicants receive regular detailed reports and in-depth analysis of all criminal activity on site, along with tracking of trespassers, assistance with neighborhood watch, and regular site visits and inspections, in addition to other services. Each property is subjected to an extensive exterior physical inspection – focused on crime prevention – along with a detailed lighting survey and review of security measures already in place. Place management policies and procedures are also reviewed, and a list of certification requirements and professional recommendations is generated. Once all certification requirements are met, a Safeways sign is installed on site, and the property may advertise its status as a “Safeways-certified Community.” Certification standards must be maintained continuously, and re-inspection and re-certification occurs annually. While a property is certified or in process, the client receives the full range of Safeways services

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<sup>18</sup> In 2007, the US. Department of Justice’s Office of Community Oriented Policing Services released “Using Crime Prevention through Environmental Design in Problem-Solving” as a part of its Problem-Oriented Guides for Police Problem Solving Tools Series. A 2000 study published in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine (Effectiveness of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) in Reducing Robberies by C. Casteel and C. Peek-Asa, (May 2000, p.18(4):99-115), found that CPTED was an effective approach to reducing robberies. Multi-component CPTED programs saw robberies decline by between 30 and 84 percent.

<sup>19</sup> Sakip, S.R.M., N. Johari, et al., “The Relationship between Crime Prevention through Environmental Design and Fear of Crime,” Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences (2012, 68:628-636.)



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### Key Outcomes:

- 1. Expand Safeways inspection/consultation services to at least 50 % of 100+ unit properties by the end of the 5-year period.**
- 2. Expand from the current 8% to at least 30% of 100+ unit properties participating in the Safeways certification program by the end of the five year period.**
- 3. Reduce the mean level of reported crime in 100+ unit properties by at least xx% by 2021.**

### **GOAL B. Strengthen law enforcement's ability to reduce violent street crime.**

#### Key Goal Outcomes:

- Reduce aggravated assaults by at least xx%.
- Reduce murders by at least xx%.
- Reduce robberies by at least xx%.

(These Goal B outcomes contribute to the target of reducing major violent crime by at least 30%.)

### **Objective B1: Clarify and resolve shortages in law enforcement resources. (MPD, SCSO)**

#### Why this objective?

The Memphis Police Department (MPD) is budgeted for a complement of 2304 sworn officers but currently has approximately 2000. The understaffed force means overtime is over-used to meet basic coverage needs and is putting a strain on officers and the budget. Optimal policing is simply not possible with this degree of understaffing. MPD and the City of Memphis will prioritize resources and initiate innovative new recruiting and staffing strategies – including an expanded Police Service Technician (PST) program. A zero-based staffing assessment with outside consulting support will be completed to confirm the optimal staffing allocations and complement size which MPD leadership currently estimates is 2400-2500. The Shelby County Sheriff's



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Office (SCSO) will also conduct a zero-based staffing assessment to confirm ideal complement size. Currently SCSO is budgeted for a complement of **xxx**. It estimates needing a complement of **xxx**. However, even in advance of any zero-based study, it is clear that the MPD staffing needs expansion. For example, homicide investigators in Memphis are handling well above the national average of cases per investigator. An FBI study of 2008 noted the average homicide investigator handles five new investigations per year; Memphis investigators have been assigned as many as 15. MPD is also clearing homicides at a rate exceeding the national average. The average clearance rate in 2014 across the U.S. was 64.5%; Memphis has solved 74% of the 2016 homicides (MPD).<sup>20</sup> While some short-term needs might be addressed through implementation of internal reorganization, there is an outright, clear need for more personnel. And more law enforcement resources need to be available to focus specifically on gang-affiliated violent crime.

### **Key Outcomes:**

- 1. Achieve the current level of funded complements in both the Memphis Police Department and Shelby County Sheriff's Office by **xxx**.**
- 2. Achieve assessment-based ideal complements in both agencies by July 2021.**

### **Objective B2: Use additional law enforcement resources to expand data-driven, proactive policing. (MPD, SCSO)**

#### **Why this Objective?**

Good data/intelligence is the foundation of successful policing. Research has proven that when police resources are focused on hot spots and high risk offenders based on good data, crimes can be more successfully prevented, interrupted, and solved.<sup>21</sup> While strategic deployment of limited resources has become all the more critical given local law enforcement staffing shortages, more fully engaging with proactive policing will undoubtedly require the increase in complements set forth as Objective B1.

Given available resources, law enforcement should allocate a significant portion to enhanced intelligence gathering and analysis. Proactive policing, at its best, uses sophisticated data analysis to understand and anticipate crimes and deploys officers based on that data to prevent, interrupt, and solve crimes. It is

20 (<https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u-s-2014/offenses-known-to-law-enforcement/clearances/browse-by/national-data>).

21 Braga, Anthony A. and Weisburd, David L., "Focused Deterrence and the Prevention of Violent Gun Injuries: Practice, Theoretical Principles, and Scientific Evidence," *Annual Review of Public Health*, Vol. 36: 55 -68 (March 2015).



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the opposite of simply responding to calls for service. Officer deployment should be based on such a proactive policing model.

Memphis and Shelby County have been engaged in data-driven policing for a number of years. Part of OSC-1 was the expansion of this methodology through use of increased resources including upgraded technology and increased personnel with the Memphis Police Department. This approach was very successful and was widely seen as a key contributor to the reduction in crime during the first OSC plan.<sup>22</sup> Technology allows the MPD “to receive instant information on recent criminal activity in a radius around a crime, existing crime patterns in the neighborhood, and a history of people with arrest records who may frequent the area.”<sup>23</sup> The Shelby County Sheriff’s Office also engages data-driven technology through its Data Smart Policing unit, also launched as part of OSC-1. With the advent of ever more advanced technologies a decade since that time, including a recently enhanced Real Time Crime Center, for example, it is time for focused re-investment of time and resources to proactive policing.

### **Key Outcome:**

- 1. Increase enforcement of weapons laws violations and felony drug violations by xx%.**

### **Objective B3: Enhance law enforcement training to better serve the community. (MPD, SCSO)**

#### **Why this objective?**

MPD and SCSO will review and update policies and training on practices such as use of force, searches and seizures, and detention of individuals based on reasonable suspicion, as recommended by the President’s Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing. Up-to-date and continual training of law enforcement personnel is important to insuring the ability of prosecutors to pursue prosecutions successfully. The task force specifically addressed opportunities for the law enforcement community to help implement the task force recommendations, among them training in the areas noted, as well as engaging the community and police unions in this process.<sup>24</sup> Among specific

22 Blue C.R.U.S.H. (Crime Reduction Using Statistical History) employed technology to enhance crime analysis and was one of the more visible elements of proactive policing during this time period.

23 <http://www.memphispolice.org/rtcc.asp>.

24 The task force also made recommendations for local government and communities in general. Many of these recommendations are reflected in other segments of the OSC-3 plan, for example, surveys regarding community attitudes toward policing, allocation of government



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recommendations, the task force included training on use of force, de-escalation techniques, and alternatives to arrest, examining hiring practices to better involve the community in recruiting new officers, and ensuring that officers have access to the tools that will keep them safe, such as bulletproof vests and tactical first aid kits and training.<sup>25</sup>

### **Key Outcome:**

- 1. Increase awareness by law enforcement officers of proper practices and standards in key enforcement areas.**

### **Objective B4: Enhance the use of intelligence and data-gathering to address gang violence. (Multi-Agency Gang Unit)**

Gang activity and crimes committed by gang-affiliated offenders constitutes a large percentage of violent street crime. Of the 156 homicides<sup>26</sup> committed in 2016 by September 10, 40% of the victims were gang members and 17% involved suspects who were gang members.<sup>27</sup> Additionally, 14% of these homicides were also classified as gang-motivated.<sup>28</sup> However, many others are classified as gang-related, meaning simply that gang members were involved although the motives were not necessarily related to gang business.

The Multi-Agency Gang Unit (MGU), created as an initiative of OSC-1 in 2011, is a task force including the MPD, the Sheriff's Office, the FBI, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), as well as on a part-time basis, the U.S. Marshal Service, Shelby County District Attorney's Office, U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of TN, Shelby County Sheriff's Office of Homeland Security, TN Department of Correction, and U.S. Department of Homeland Security/Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Together, these agencies work to investigate then prosecute incidents involving gangs with a focus on guns and drugs. The MGU oversees investigations for petitioning the Environmental Court for injunctive relief within certain geographic areas, so-called "gang injunctions."

This objective is designed to provide intensive focus on gang violence.

### **Key Outcomes:**

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resources, and citizen participation "in problem-solving efforts to reduce crime and improve quality of life." See, Implementation Guide, The President's Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing, retrieved from [http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/taskforce/Implementation\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/taskforce/Implementation_Guide.pdf).

25 Id.

26 Homicides includes those considered criminal (murder) and others.

27 MPD Homicide Bureau report, September 10, 2016.

28 MPD Homicide Bureau report, September 16, 2016.



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- 1. Reduce the number of arrests for three or more committing aggravated assaults and robberies by at least 20%.**
- 2. Increase the number of enforcement actions (such as drug houses closed and gang injunctions).**

**Objective B5: Effectively implement a “Group Violence Intervention” (GVI) model in which multiple law enforcement and prosecution agencies team up with community members and social service providers to deliver a “carrot and stick” approach to curbing gang-affiliated gun violence. (Multi-Agency Gang Unit)**

### Why this objective?

Pioneered as “Operation Ceasefire” in Boston during the 1990s, “group violence intervention/focused deterrence” strategies have acquired a strong formal evaluation record.<sup>29</sup> When implemented correctly, they have repeatedly demonstrated that gun violence can be dramatically reduced “when a partnership of community members, law enforcement, and social service providers directly engages with the small and active number of people involved in street gangs and clearly communicates a credible moral message against violence, prior notice about the consequences of further violence, and a genuine offer of help for those who want it.”<sup>30</sup> The GVI approach reflects a public health sensibility to solving chronic community violence issues. Public health models involve: “(a) a focus on prevention, (b) a focus on scientific methodology to identify risks and patterns, and (c) multidisciplinary collaboration to address the issue(s).”<sup>31</sup> As a recent example, after identifying the most violent gangs responsible for New Haven’s surge in shootings, the city’s police conducted a series of call-ins to issue warnings to gang members while offering help with housing, drug counseling, and job training. In the program’s first three years, based on this “carrot and stick” approach, the city saw monthly shootings drop, on average, nearly 73%. The GVI initiative is similar to what is known as the Gang Alternative and Prevention (GAP) program that was employed in New York City. These models involve not just the gang

29 Braga, Anthony A. and Weisburd, David L., “Focused Deterrence and the Prevention of Violent Gun Injuries: Practice, Theoretical Principles, and Scientific Evidence,” Annual Review of Public Health, Vol. 36: 55 -68 (March 2015).

30 National Network for Safe Communities, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, “Proven strategies for reducing violence and strengthening communities,” (n.d., p.11).

31 Braga and Weisburd, (2015, p. 58-59), citing Inst. Med. 2008. Violence Prevention in Low-and Middle-Income Countries: Finding a Place on the Global Agenda: Workshop Summary. Washington, DC: Natl. Acad. Press.



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member, but seek to address family needs that might impact an individual's decision to be involved in a gang in the first place. Understanding the various reasons why youths join gangs is critical and helps inform the possible remedies for individuals. Additionally, law enforcement may reach out to adult gang members in an effort to convince them to release a youth from the gang. The Memphis Shelby County Multi-Agency Gang Unit, including District Attorney, U.S. Attorney, MPD and SCSO, will join with community groups to implement, track, and measure the effects of GVI across Shelby County.

### **Key Outcomes:**

- 1. Reduce youth (ages 24 and under) homicides (perpetrators and victims) by at least 50%;**
- 2. Reduce aggravated assaults involving firearms by at least 30%;**
- 3. Reduce calls for service for shots fired by at least 30%.**

### **Objective B6: Strengthen state penalties for convicted felons in possession of firearms and then actively communicate the consequences. (Memphis Shelby Crime Commission)**

#### **Why this objective?**

The Memphis Shelby Crime Commission will support the introduction of legislation in the Tennessee General Assembly to address the problem of illegal possession of guns by those with criminal records and help garner support for the legislation from across the state

Research nationally and locally has demonstrated that policies and practices designed to hold offenders accountable, coupled with conveying the consequences to potential offenders, can have a significant impact on the crime rate.<sup>32</sup> For example, the federal-state-local crackdown on violent gun crime known as Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN), when coupled with the DA's no plea bargaining policy for the most serious gun crimes and accompanying communication campaign (Gun Crime = Jail Time), had a dramatic effect on reducing gun crime, in large part by addressing illegal possession of guns by those with criminal records. The strength of that effort, however, relied heavily on federal law and its tougher penalties, since state law is still not as strong as it needs to be in this area. There aren't enough federal resources currently to deal with all illegal gun possession cases. We need tougher state laws to allow the DA to effectively prosecute in state court convicted felons in possession of

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<sup>32</sup> See, e.g., Braga and Weisburd (2015).



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guns. Additionally, a new communication campaign needs to be part of this effort.

**Key Outcome:**

- 1. Reduce reported gun crimes by at least 30%.**

### **GOAL C. Enhance domestic violence prevention and intervention efforts.**

**Key Goal Outcome:**

- Reduce domestic violence reported incidents by at least 25%.  
(This Goal C outcome contributes to the target of reducing major violent crime by 30% and overall crime by 25%.)**

#### **Objective C1: Evaluate and expand the success of the Family Safety Center in reducing re-victimization. (Family Safety Center)**

**Why this objective?**

Domestic violence offenses comprise a large percentage of all of major violent crime measured within our community. In order to reduce overall crime, including major violent crime, domestic violence occurrences must also decrease. Unlike other offense areas, DV involves relationships, often intimate ones where housing and childcare responsibilities are shared. Close attention must, therefore, be provided to victims of domestic violence. The Shelby County Family Safety Center (FSC), based on a recognized best practice in the prevention and intervention of domestic violence, is a safe “one stop” place where victims of domestic violence can receive help, advice, and access to more than 40 agencies offering civil, criminal, health, and social services.<sup>33</sup> Opened in 2012, its purpose is to provide a seamless, victim-centered hub of services where victims and families can get the help they need to avoid further victimization and bring their perpetrators to justice.

Part of the implementation of best practices for assisting DV victims was the adoption by Shelby County, in 2015, of the Blueprint for Safety. The Blueprint is just that, a guide to working with all aspects of the system with which a victim comes in contact, from 911, to patrol officers, to investigation best

<sup>33</sup>The FSC is one of many Family Justice Centers across the country, as recognized through Title I of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA 2005). These centers use a “wraparound” service delivery model.



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practices, to the courtroom. It is designed to help victims navigate the system so that they are more likely to be willing to engage and complete the process. The Blueprint helps assess victims at elevated risk; it encourages investigators to issue all charges that might be appropriate under the fact situation; it guides courthouse personnel to provide safe spaces where victims can wait for a case to be called.<sup>34</sup> These and other components are seen as necessary to improving legal outcomes for victims and thereby are critical elements in reducing re-victimization. The leadership of the FSC is committed to undergoing an outside evaluation of its impact and then to raising funds to meet identified needs. Outcomes may be modified based upon the results of this evaluation process.

### **Key Outcomes:**

- 1. Reduce the number of FSC clients experiencing re-victimization by 25%.**
- 2. Increase the percentage of permanent Orders of Protection granted by xx%.**

**Objective C2: Effectively implement a “domestic violence initiative (DVI)” model in which multiple law enforcement agencies team up with community members and social service providers to deal with repeat domestic violence offenders with a “carrot and stick” model. (DA)**

### **Why this objective?**

Unlike the victim-centered Family Safety Center, the Domestic Violence Initiative (DVI) focuses on the offender and has shown promising reductions in domestic violence in a few communities, including High Point, NC and Stearns County, MN.<sup>35</sup> For example, prior to implementation of the model in 2011, High Point was experiencing three to five intimate partner homicides each year. Since implementation over the past five years, there have been two such homicides total. Re-arrest rates for domestic violence have also fallen dramatically.<sup>36</sup> With a carrot and stick approach, a partnership of law enforcement, prosecutors, community members, social service providers, and domestic violence victims’ advocates put repeat DV offenders on notice –

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34 Shelby County Blueprint for Safety.

35 Although these communities are smaller than Memphis and Shelby County, the focused principles employed can be applied here through a graduated roll-out.

36 Buntin, John, “How High Point, N.C., Solved Its Domestic Violence Problem,” Governing (March 2016), retrieved from <http://www.governing.com/topics/public-justice-safety/gov-domestic-violence-focused-deterrence.html>.



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through a letter, an in-person notification by an arresting officer, or a community “call-in” -- of community intolerance for domestic violence and that further and more serious offending will be met with a strong response. It also takes special steps to remove from the community the most dangerous domestic violence offenders, who tend also to commit other serious crimes at relatively high rates. The DA will coordinate law enforcement, community partners and social service providers to implement the DVI, beginning in select neighborhoods.

### **Key Outcome:**

- 1. Reduce the number of offenders with prior domestic violence convictions by at least 25%.**

### **GOAL D. Enhance interventions with appropriate services for juveniles committing delinquent acts to reduce re-offending.**

#### **Key Goal Outcome:**

- Reduce the number of youth committing delinquent acts by 30%.**

**(This Goal D outcome contributes to the target of reducing overall crime by 25%.)**

**Objective D1: Establish a juvenile assessment center (JAC) to provide needs assessments and appropriate interventions for non-violent juvenile offenders (both delinquent and status offenders) rather than automatically involving them in the criminal justice system. (Shelby County)**

#### **Why this objective?**

Approximately 7,000 youth engaged with the juvenile justice system in Shelby County in both 2014 and 2015. While most youth are neither violent<sup>37</sup> nor

<sup>37</sup> Various jurisdictions may define “violent” and “non-violent” offenses differently. This plan employs the definitions reflected by FBI reporting standards, i.e., Part I major violent crimes, as murders, rapes, robberies, and aggravated assaults.



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likely to return to the system, evidence suggests that contact with the court system can enhance the likelihood of escalating behaviors.<sup>38</sup> Shelby County has substantially reduced the numbers of youth transported to and/or detained at juvenile court. However, this “catch and release” system is frustrating to both law enforcement and the general public. These youth are still eventually processed as juvenile offenders, and law enforcement is still spending inordinate hours processing these youth, even for status offenses such as curfew violations. This is not the best use of limited resources nor are the outcomes necessarily the most beneficial to youthful offenders, their families, or the community at large.

Based on the best practices Miami/Dade County model, the juvenile assessment center (JAC) will unburden law enforcement by creating a drop off point where the needs of nonviolent juvenile offenders and their families can be triaged. It will allow for creation of a compliance program similar to diversion focused on wraparound services and restorative justice principles, but handled outside of the jurisdiction of the juvenile court. Compliance with the JAC program will enable a youth to avoid all contact with the juvenile justice system.

*This plan may require legislative action to allow for implementation of a pilot project in Shelby County, as the juvenile court has exclusive jurisdiction over all juvenile delinquency matters.* The Memphis Shelby Crime Commission and partners will work to enact any needed legislation to help create the JAC. Additionally, the process of developing an effective, working model will necessitate careful planning involving a broad cross-section of community agencies, authorities, research institutions, and other entities. It is anticipated this planning process will comprise a healthy portion of the early years of this objective.

Expected benefits (as realized in Miami) include:

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38 Mahoney, Anne R., “The Effect of Labeling upon Youths in the Juvenile Justice System: A Review of the Evidence,” *Law & Society Review*, Vol. 8 (Summer, 1974), pp. 583-614. “The common sense notion that stigma results from court contact has been legitimated by its transformation into a ‘theory.’” (Mahoney, at p. 583). (“Labeling theory” essentially states that if a youth is declared “delinquent,” the child may be seen by the outside world as such and may come to see him or herself in the same way. As that unfolds, the “avenues to law-abiding behavior begin to close for the youth as he (sic) is pushed toward the outer boundaries of the ‘acceptable’ community.” (*Id.*, at p.585). See, also, Liberman, Akiva, Kirk, David, and Kim, KiDeuk, “Labeling Effects of First Juvenile Arrests: Secondary Deviance and Secondary Sanctioning,” (February 2014), retrieved from <http://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/alfresco/publication-pdfs/413274-Labeling-Effects-of-First-Juvenile-Arrests-Secondary-Deviance-and-Secondary-Sanctioning.PDF>.



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- More youth will be triaged to reveal underlying issues leading to delinquent behaviors.
- Offending youth will have swift, sure, and measured repercussions for their behaviors.
- Law enforcement is provided an option to remove the youth from the street or location rather than catch and release and spends less time in transfer.
- Savings are seen through less law enforcement overtime as they get back on patrol quickly.
- Public perception that nothing is done about offending youth may be positively impacted.
- If fidelity to process is observed, more youth and families will receive meaningful services, thereby improving lives and strengthening communities.
- Disproportionate minority contact may be positively impacted as more youth receive services instead of contact with juvenile court.

### **Key Outcomes:**

1. **Reduce the number of youth referred to Juvenile Court by at least 50%.**
2. **Reduce the number of juveniles committing repeat delinquent acts by at least 35%.**

**Objective D2: Develop a system of Evening Reporting Centers (ERC) across the county to serve more delinquent juveniles at the community level. (Juvenile Court, Shelby County Schools)**

### **Why this objective?**

Some juvenile offenders occupy the space between requiring detention due the public safety threat posed by their release and those many youth (the majority) who are unlikely to reoffend. For these at-risk youth, addressing the vulnerable time in their schedules at the end of the school day can serve as a powerful intervention. Research has demonstrated the after-school and evening hours present a peak window during which delinquent acts occur.<sup>39</sup> Evening reporting centers serve as a community-based alternative to detention during these hours. The structure allows the juvenile to attend school during the day, but

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<sup>39</sup> Decker, Scott H., "Responding to Gangs, Guns and Youth Crime: Principles from Strategic Problem Solving Approaches," Arizona State University (n.d.).



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then provides structure and intervention services to help move the youth to better choices. Shelby County Juvenile Court currently contracts with Juvenile Interventions and Faith-based Follow-up (JIFF) to provide an ERC, a 4-week (20 days) program. The ERC model is recognized by the Annie E. Casey Foundation as a best practice and is operating in numerous locations across the country. It provides intensive after-school supervision in a supportive environment. ERCs pick up youth at their schools and transport them to the facility, provide snacks, homework supervision, physical activity, dinner, mentoring and counseling, and then transport the youth home in the evening. Shelby County Juvenile Court seeks to expand the capacity of Shelby County ERCs dramatically to service approximately 600 juveniles from the 50-60 currently served on an annual basis by JIFF. Data from around the country indicates ERCs are succeeding in preventing these youth from committing new offenses. For example, in Harrisburg, PA 85% of youth did not commit a new offense while participating in the program;<sup>40</sup> in Clayton County, GA, of those tracked, the ERC noted a non-recidivism rate of 93% for six months following completion of their program.<sup>41</sup> In a study of 23 ERCs across the country conducted by Missouri State University, participating youth completed the ERC program without receiving a citation for new delinquent act at a rate of between 77-97%.<sup>42</sup> Due to the short length of the program, the ERC is not designed to be therapeutic, but can help to determine previously unmet social needs and thereby provide assist in resolving underlying issues which may be contributing to delinquent behaviors.

**Key Outcomes:**

- 1. Maintain a compliance rate by participants with the ERC program requirements of at least 85%;**
- 2. Less than 10% of participating juveniles will commit new offenses within one year of ending participation.**

**GOAL E. Strengthen intervention programs for ex-offenders.**

40 Data reflects 2009 measures. Retrieved from: <http://modelsforchange.net/newsroom/164>

41 <http://jjie.org/evening-reporting-center-keeps-kids-out-of-trouble-during-peak-crime-hours-administrators-say/16098/>

42 Garland, Brett, "Juvenile Evening Reporting Centers: A Research Note on an Emerging Practice," Missouri State University (2014). However, this study cautioned that ERC participation alone did not necessarily show largely better outcomes for youth compared to other alternatives to detention (for example, ankle electronic monitoring). Clearly defined goals for the ERC are critical to its successful development.



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### **Key Goal Outcome:**

- Reduce repeat offenders by 30%.

**(This Goal E outcome contributes to the target of reducing overall crime by 25%.)**

**Objective E1: In order to increase their chances of breaking the cycle of crime, implement a jobs program for high-risk ex-offenders that adds a transitional work feature to the more traditional program elements of job placement, life skills and mental health support. (MSCOR, WIN)**

### **Why this objective?**

If the employment needs of persons with criminal convictions are addressed at their most vulnerable point—when they are first released from incarceration or soon after conviction—by providing life skills education, short-term paid transitional employment, full-time job placement and post-placement support services and mental health services, they will be less likely to become re-incarcerated and more likely to build a foundation for a stable, productive life for themselves and their families. Because high-risk ex-offenders are those most likely to have difficulty finding employment, and because they are also likeliest to commit more crimes if they are not stewarded to a productive life, a special focus on their needs – especially transitional employment – is needed. The Memphis Shelby County Office of Re-Entry (MSCOR) will partner with Workforce Investment Network (WIN) to launch a new program using a proven model with a provider having a sound track record for success with high risk offenders. Such programs have, in other communities, yielded remarkable results.<sup>43</sup> Not only were a higher number of ex-offenders successful in obtaining permanent employment and retaining it for a longer period of time, but re-arrests and recidivism rates also were lower for these participants compared to a control group.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> The Center for Employment Opportunity, for example, reports similar results from their work in New York City with more than 4,300 participants as those reflected in our target outcomes.

<sup>44</sup> MDRC (2012), “More than a Job: Final results from the evaluation of the Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO) Transitional Jobs Program. OPRE Report 2011-2018, Washington, DC: Office of Planning and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, US Department of Health and Human Services.



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### Key Outcomes:

- 1. Reduce the number of convicted felons returning to the community from incarceration who re-offend within one year by at least xx% and three years by at least xx%.**
- 2. At least 90% of participating ex-offenders are placed into permanent jobs.**
- 3. At least 60% of participating ex-offenders will maintain a permanent job after 6 months and at least 50% after one year.**

**Objective E2: Effectively implement the state's new system of "swift, certain and fair" administrative sanctions in lieu of incarceration for violating certain conditions of probation or parole. (TDOC)**

### Why this objective?

Of the 12,588 people entering state prison last year, 5,061 – or 40 percent – were probationers or parolees sent to prison because they violated supervision conditions.<sup>45</sup> Human behavior research across many decades indicates that an immediate response to behavior is always more effective than a delayed response.<sup>46</sup> Any response that requires secure confinement can have negative consequences on positive supports an offender has in the community. Even a short period of detention or incarceration can cause offenders to lose jobs, housing, or custody of their children. Additionally, confinement is significantly higher cost to taxpayers. The “Swift, Certain, and Fair (SCF)” approach to community supervision reduces reoffending, arrest, and incarceration by replacing unpredictable and high-level sanctions for probation violations with swift, certain, but proportionate penalties.

Enacted by the TN General Assembly, the Public Safety Act of 2016 included a retooling of community supervision to reduce the number of people returning to prison for probation and parole violations when their noncompliance does not rise to the level of a new criminal offense. Specifically, the Tennessee Department of Correction (TDOC) has a robust sanctions matrix that provides a

<sup>45</sup> Final Report of the Governor’s Task Force on Sentencing and Recidivism (September 2015).

<sup>46</sup> See, e.g., Paternoster, R., “Decisions to Participate in and Desist From Four Types of Common Delinquency: Deterrence and the Rational Choice Perspective,” Law and Society Review 23: pp. 7-40 (1989), abstract retrieved from <https://www.ncjrs.gov/App/Publications/abstract.aspx?ID=116884>.



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range of sanctions for violations that officers can quickly impose. These community-based sanctions are now the preferred response when offenders violate the terms of their supervision. The partners of the Crime Commission will work with TDOC, judges, probation and parole officers and others to promote and ensure the effective implementation of this new system of swift, certain and fair administrative sanctions in Shelby County.

### **Outcomes:**

- 1. Reduce number and percentage of violator returns from Shelby County by at least xx%.**
- 2. Of those on probation or parole in Shelby County, the percent convicted of a new felony or class A misdemeanor within a year and within 3 years of when their supervision began will be reduced by xx%.**